

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSM-05 MCT-01 HA-05 IO-14 EUR-12  
H-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-02 ICA-20  
SP-02 /085 W  
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R 280832Z JUN 78  
FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2517  
INFO AMCONSUL DHAHRAN  
USLO RIYADH

UNCLAS JIDDA 4787

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y F O R R E F E R N E C E

E.O. 11652:N/A  
TAGS: SOPN  
SUBJ: CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

REF: JIDDA 4786  
1. ENGLISH-LANGUAGE ARAB NEWS RAN EDITORIAL UNDER ABOVE TITLE  
ON 24 JUNE ESSENTIAL TEXT FOLLOWS:  
FLOGGING OF TWO BRITONS IN JAIL OVER A DRINKING AND ILLEGAL  
SALE OF ALCOHOL OFFENCE HAS BEEN GIVEN WIDE PUBLICITY IN  
WESTERN PRESS. THERE HAS BEEN OCCASIONAL BURSTS OF INTEREST  
IN OUR PRACTICES, AND EXECUTION BY THE SWORD HAS ALWAYS  
BEEN POPULAR TARGET. THIS TIME, HOWEVER, REACTION TO THE  
FLOGGINGS HAS BEEN MIXED, ALBEIT VERY WIDE. EVEN STAUNCH  
CONSERVATION NEWSPAPER "DAILY TELEGRAPH" HAS BEEN ANGERED BY  
THE ARTIFICIAL OUTCRY AND HAS CONDEMNED THE PEOPLE  
BEHIND IT IS A STARTING EDITORIAL WHICH HAS ALSO NOTED  
THAT WHILE FLOGGING MAY BE REJECTED ON "MORAL AND HUMANE  
GROUNDS" FACT REMAINS THAT PERSONS INVOLVED HAVE VIOLATED  
LAWS OF THE LAND AND DESERVED PUNISHMENT, IN LETTERS TO  
THE SAME AND OTHER LONDON NEWSPAPERS. MANY READERS HAVE  
SUPPORTED THE PUNISHMENT AS METED OUT BY SAUDI AUTHORITIES  
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AND HAVE CONDEMNED THE TWO MEN FOR VIOLATING THE LAW AFTER  
BEING FOREWARNED OF PUNISHMENT INVOLVED.  
DESPITE THE RELATIVE FAIR UNDERSTANDING OF SAUDI POSITION  
ON FLOGGING, MISCONCEPTIONS PERSIST. THE "MORAL AND HUMANE  
GROUNDS" FOR EXAMPLE, DOES NOT HOLD WATER IN THE CASE OF  
PUNISHMENT IN THE KINGDOM BECAUSE THE FLOGGING IS  
CARRIED OUT DIFFERENTLY. SEVENTY STROKES "WESTERN STYLE"

COULD LEAD TO DEATH OF MAN AT RECEIVING END BECAUSE THE HAND IS ALLOWED TO MOVE FREELY AND THE WHIP AT THE END OF IT CAN CUT THE FLESH OPEN. IN SAUDI ARABIA, THE HAND AT THE END OF THE CANE MOVES ONLY FROM THE ELBOW SO THAT THE STROKES ARE WEAK AND THERE IS NO DANGER OF DAMAGE TO LIVER OR KIDNEYS. LONDON EDITORIAL WRITERS HAVE OBVIOUSLY MISSED THE POINT. THEY HAVE ALSO FAILED TO REMEMBER THAT IN THE BRITISH ISLE OF MAN CANING IS PRACTISED TODAY AND IN A MUCH MORE PAINFUL WAY THAN IN SAUDI ARABIA. BUT IT APPEARS THAT WHAT IS SAUCE FOR THE BRITISH GANDER IS NOT SAUCE FOR THE SAUDI GOOSE. IN RELATED INSTANCE, NO ONE SEEMS TO REMEMBER THAT THE FRENCH USE OF GUILLOTINE WHICH IS NOT DIFFERENT FROM THE SWORD. BOTH ARE PERHAPS THE MOST PAINLESS FORMS OF EXECUTION, CERTAINLY FAR BETTER THAN HANGING WHICH LEAVES A MAN DANGLING AT THE END OF A ROPE FOR UP TO TWO OR THREE MINUTES.

BUT MOST IMPORTANT ASPECT OF SAUDI LAW IS THAT IT IS BASED ON THE BOOK OF GOD AND THIS WILL NEVER CHANGE. THIS LAW HAS HELD THE COUNTRY IN GOOD STEAD FOR YEARS AND THANKS TO IT SAUDI ARABIA TODAY BOASTS LOWEST CRIME RATE OF ANY COUNTRY IN THE WORLD. ACCORDING TO U.N. STATISTICS. WESTERNERS ESPECIALLY AMERICANS, IN THE KINGDOM NEVER CEASE TO MARVEL AT THE BEAUTY OF LAW AND ORDER IN THE COUNTRY. NO MAN OR WOMAN NEEDS TO LOCK HIMSELF OR HERSELF UP AT HOME AT SUNSET AS LAW OF THE JUNGLE TAKES OVER IN CITY STREETS. NO PERSON HAS TO WORRY ABOUT HIS LIFE IF HE CARRIES CASH IN HIS POCKET

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OR IF HE MOVES INTO A STRANGE NEIGHBORHOOD. SHOPKEEPERS DO NOT NEED TO PUT HAND GUNS IN THEIR TILLS AND SHOPPERS DO NOT NEED TO BUY ON CREDIT TO AVOID CARRYING BANKNOTES. AND FINALLY, THIS IS OUR LAW AND WE LIKE IT. WE WOULD UNDERSTAND CRITICISM IF WE WERE PUSHING OTHERS TO EMULATE US. WE AREN'T AND WE HOPE THAT THEY WOULD STOP TRYING TO MEASURE US BY THEIR OWN SCALES. THIS COUNTRY IS WRAPPED IN A TRADITION OF FAITH AND FAMILY THAT IS PROJECTED IN ITS LAWS AND REGULATIONS. WE WILL CHERISH AND DEFEND IT AT ALL TIMES.

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Draft Date:** 28 jun 1978  
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**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
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**Disposition Date:** 01 jan 1960  
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**TAGS:** SOPN, PINT, SHUM, SA, UK  
**To:** STATE  
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